



George Barrington's Interview with Miss Egerton.

THE GENUINE
LIFE AND TRIAL

OF

George Barrington,

FROM HIS BIRTH, IN JUNE, 1755,

TO THE

Time of his Conviction at the OLD-BAILLY,

In SEPTEMBER, 1790,

For robbing HENRY HARE TOWNSEND, ESQ.

of his gold Watch, Seals, &c.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR ROBERT BARKER, IN NOVEMBER, 1790.

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Memoirs of George Barrington.

THE attention of the public has been, for several years past, fixed, in a particular manner, on **GEORGE BARRINGTON**; the principal events of whose life form the subject of the following sheets: and, indeed, since the days of Jonathan Wild, no man, of the description of those whose names generally grace the Newgate Calendar, seems to have deserved public notice so much as he does. He certainly possesses talents, which, had they been properly directed, and prudently conducted, on his first setting out, might have enabled him to make a distinguished figure either in the line of literature or in the line of business. But having, early in life, made one false step, and that followed by a series of base actions, we see him advance progressively in the career of guilt and disgrace, until all sensibility of the difference between right and wrong, honour and shame, was obliterated in his mind, and all sense of moral obligation had totally perished in his breast; becoming thus not only inferior to a man without feeling or affections, but worse than a beast of the forest without instinct.

The person so well known, in this capital, by the name of **GEORGE BARRINGTON**, and so unfortunately distinguished in it as a pick-pocket, was born about the year 1755, at a village called Maynooth, in the county of Kildare in Ireland. His father, Henry Waldron, was a working silversmith; and his mother, whose maiden name was Naish, exercised the trade of a mantua-maker, and occasionally practised midwifery in the neighbourhood in which she lived; where her character, as well as that of her husband, stood high for integrity and industry. But, though their honesty was unimpeached, and their industry, as well as their temperance, exemplary, they were never able to extricate themselves from the state of abject poverty, in which they were sunk, in consequence of a law-suit, imprudently commenced and unskillfully conducted, against a powerful and wealthy relation, whom they unsuccessfully sued for a sum of money,

to which they conceived themselves to be legally intitled. The indigence of their circumstances did not allow them to improve, by a liberal education, the excellent talents which their son George derived from nature, and which discovered themselves in him at a very early age. They, however, contrived to have him taught to read and write, and he was, by a neighbouring surgeon, instructed in common arithmetic, the elements of geography, and the general principles of grammar.

When he entered on the sixteenth year of his age, he was noticed and patronized by Dr. C—, of Leixlip, in the county of Dublin, a dignitary in the church of Ireland, of an ancient and illustrious family, and ample fortune. Through the interest of this respectable clergyman, young Waldron was placed at a free grammar-school in the Irish capital, where his patron proposed he should fit himself for the university: a theatre on which he hoped, from the genius discovered by him at an early period of his life, he might, in time, make such a figure as to rival the oldest and ablest actors; and, in order to enable him to make an appearance equal to the young gentlemen with whom he was now to associate, the Doctor supplied him very liberally with money, and every other necessary, to render his situation in the school not only comfortable but also respectable.

This ill-fated youth enjoyed, however, but for a short time the benefits that he derived from the kindness of his patron; for, the violence of his passions, which equalled, at least, the extent of his talents, precipitated him into an action, by which he lost Doctor C——'s favour for ever, and which, in its consequences, finally proved his ruin. When he had been about half a year at the grammar-school, he unluckily got into a dispute with a lad, much older, and larger, and stronger, than himself; the dispute degenerated into a quarrel, and some blows ensued, in which young Waldron suffered considerably; but, in order to be revenged, he stabbed his antagonist with a penknife; and, had he not been seasonably prevented, would have, in all probability, murdered him. The wounds which he gave did not prove so dangerous as to render the circumstances of the quarrel, which occasioned them, a subject of legal investigation.

effligation. The discipline of the house, (flogging,) however, was inflicted with proper severity on the perpetrator of so atrocious an offence, which irritated the unrelenting and vindictive temper of the young man to such a degree, that he determined at once to run away from school, from his family, and from his friends; thus abandoning the fair prospects that he had before him, and blasting all the hopes that had been fondly, though vainly, formed of the great things that might be effected by his genius, when matured by time, and improved by study.

His plan of escape was no sooner framed than it was carried into execution; but, previous to his departure, he found means to steal ten or twelve guineas from Mr. F——, the master of the school, and a gold repeating watch from Mrs. Gouldsbrough, the master's sister. With this booty, a few shirts, and two or three pairs of stockings, he silently, but safely, effected his retreat from the school-house, in the middle of a still night, in the month of May, 1771; and, pursuing the great northern road all that night and all the next day, he, late in the evening, arrived at the town of Drogheda, without interruption, without accident, and, in a great measure, without halting, without rest, and without food.

There happened to quarter, at the obscure inn at which he put up, on his arrival at Drogheda, a set of strolling players; and with these he, without ceremony or loss of time, formed an intimacy, that continued some years, with mutual advantage to the parties concerned in it.

John Price, the manager of this strolling company, was a native of the town of Poole, in Dorsetshire; he was of a good family, of an agreeable figure, lively in conversation, conciliating in his manners, and had been tolerably well educated. Having lived some time in London, where he was clerk to one Potter, a pettifogging attorney, he was intimately acquainted with the town, and all the arts of fraud or violence that are practised in it, by the lower and most unprincipled classes, to procure money: for, entering too deeply or too unwarily into some practices of such a nature, he was prosecuted; and, having been convicted at the Old Bailey, he was at this time an involuntary exile in Ireland, until

until the expiration of the term for which he was sentenced to be transported. This man became quickly the confidant and, from the confidant, the counsellor, the tutor, the sovereign director, as it were, of the fugitive Waldron, who communicated to him, without any reserve, all the circumstances of his life and story. By his advice this unhappy youth renounced his paternal name, assumed that of Barrington, entered into the company, and, in the course of four days became so absolutely and formally a strolling son of Thespis that he performed the part of Jaffier, in "Venice Preserved," with some applause, to a crowded audience, in a barn, in the suburbs of Drogheda.

Though the reception he met with on his *début* was very flattering to a mind like his, Price prudently determined that it would not be proper for him to appear in public so near the scene of his late depredations in the capital. It was therefore resolved on by them, that the whole company should, without delay, move to the Northward, and, if possible, get to the distance of sixty or eighty miles from Dublin, before they halted for any length of time. In order to enable so numerous a body to move with all their baggage, it was necessary to raise money; and, in doing this, Barrington's assistance was indispensably necessary. He was accordingly applied to, and he acquiesced with a good grace, giving Price Mrs. Gouldsbrough's gold repeater, which was disposed of, for the general benefit of the strollers.

This act of well-timed liberality rendered him popular among his new associates, who deservedly considered him as a valuable acquisition to their company. He had a speaking eye, an expressive countenance, a tolerable theatrical figure, a very pompous enunciation, and a most retentive memory. With these advantages, they observed, and, perhaps, not without some reason, that he might make, one day, a first-rate figure on the boards of Drury-Lane or Covent-Garden. But, however this may be, as soon as the necessary funds were procured, all these children of Thespis set out for Londonderry, which was the place at which they designed first to play. Travelling but slowly, they were a considerable time on their journey to that city, and, during the course of it, the penetrating eyes of the experienced actresses discovered

covered that Barrington had made a tender impression on the heart of Miss Egerton, the young lady who played the part of Belvidera when he acted that of Jaffier at Diogheda. This poor girl was the daughter of an opulent tradesman at Coventry. She was young and beautiful, sweet-tempered and accomplished, but friendless; and, though inured to misfortune, destitute of the experience which is generally acquired in a series of sinister events. At the age of sixteen she was debauched by a lieutenant of marines, with whom she fled from her father's house to Dublin, where, in less than three months, he abandoned her, leaving her a prey to infamy, poverty, and disease.

Having been thus deceived, in the simplicity of innocence, by the cunning and falsehood of one of the vilest and most profligate of human beings, she had no resource left, and was reduced to the most extreme want, when, falling in accidentally with Price, he proposed her to join his company; which, situated as she was, she readily agreed to do, and had been with him about a week when she saw Barrington, of whom she became so suddenly enamoured.

The symptoms of her affection for him were so obvious, that, inexperienced as he was then in matters of gallantry or intrigue, he perceived her passion, was sensible of her merit, and returned her love with perfect sincerity. Being of an age at which love makes almost every one a rhymist, though not a poet, he addressed her in several copies of verses, all of them short, but many of them pretty enough; as, for instance, the following lines, written a little before her death:

Place me where endless winter reigns,
Where genial gales ne'er bless the plains;
Beneath those cold inclement skies,
Where morbid vapours ever rise:
Place me beneath the burning zone,
Where nothing human e'er was known;
Still Egerton's enchanting tongue,
Her looks, and smiles, shall be my song.
Whether o'er burning sands I go,
Or mountains topt with treacherous snow,
Or where the fam'd Pacha's drags,
And all its fabled horrors lay.

She

She will alone my thoughts engage,
And ever shall, from age to age.

A connexion of this kind was necessarily attended with a considerable increase of expence; and the consequence of an increased expenditure was, that, on the arrival of the strollers at Londonderry, Barrington's whole stock of money was nearly exhausted. Thus disagreeably circumstanced, he applied for advice to his friend Price; who did not hesitate to suggest to him, how easily a young man, of his appearance and address, might find means to introduce himself into some of the public places to which the merchants and chapmen of that commercial city generally resorted; and that he there might, without any great difficulty, find opportunities of picking their pockets unnoticed, and of escaping undetected, more especially at that particular time, when, the fair being holden, a favourable juncture offered itself of executing a plan of such a nature with safety and facility. The idea pleased our adventurer, and the plan formed on it was carried into execution by him and his trusty confidant, John Price, the very next day, with great success; at least, such it appeared to them at that time, their acquisitions having amounted, on the close of the evening, to about forty guineas in cash, and above one hundred and fifty pounds, Irish currency, in bank-notes; which, however, they prudently determined, not, on any account, to circulate in that part of the kingdom in which they were obtained. This precaution became peculiarly necessary; for, several gentlemen having been robbed, the town took the alarm, which was the greater, or at least made the more noise, from the rarity of such events in that part of the kingdom, where picking of pockets is said to be very little practised or known. But, whatever the alarm was, or whatever noise it made, neither Barrington nor his accomplice were suspected. They, however, resolved to leave Derry, as soon as they could with any appearance of propriety depart: so that, having played a few nights with more applause than profit, they and their associates, the sock and buskin, removed from Londonderry to Ballyshannon, in the county of Donnegal, and never returned into that part of the kingdom;

kingdom; where George Barrington may be considered as having commenced the business of a regular and professed pick-pocket, in the summer of the year 1771, being then in the sixteenth year of his age.

After travelling about a fortnight, Barrington, with the strollers whom he accompanied, arrived at Ballyshannon, which is said to be one of the pleasantest, cheapest, most plentiful, and most polite, country-towns in Ireland. Here he, and the company to which he belonged, spent the autumn and winter of the year 1771; playing generally on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and picking pockets with John Price every day in the week, whenever opportunity offered: a business which, though attended with some danger and certain infamy, he found more lucrative and more entertaining than that of the Theatre; where his fame and his proficiency were by no means equal to the expectation he had raised, or to the hopes that had been formed of him on his first appearance at Drogheda. During the latter part of the year he was attacked by a fever, which was so violent that his life was for some time despaired of; he, however, recovered, though slowly, and the period of his convalescence was so long, that the company resolved to leave him behind, and proceed to other quarters. His favorite, Miss Egerton, who attended him during his illness with unremitting assiduity, resolved to stay with him and share his fate, whatever it might be; and Price had the spirit to pass the bank-notes at his own risque, and the generosity to leave his accomplice seventy guineas on his departure, which was, at this time, after a long and expensive illness, a very seasonable supply.

On the return of the spring, in the year 1772, his health was perfectly re-established, and he wrote some very pretty lines, addressed to Hygeia, the goddess who presided over health.

Hygeia! thou whose eyes display
The lustre of meridian day;
Auspicious goddess! still impart
Thy vital influence to my heart:
For, ah! should'st thou withdraw thy aid,
The bloom of all the spring would fade;

B.

Musie

Music in vain its joys inspire,
 And discord string the Poet's lyre;
 Fortune, unmark'd, would smile; and Fame,
 Unheard, diffuse the fav'rite name;
 Friendship no cordial drop could yield,
 Nor Freedom me from anguish shield:
 Ev'n Love itself would rule in vain,
 And all be gloom, and grief, and pain!

From Ballyshannon, on his recovery, he moved to the southward, with his faithful Miss Egerton, whom he had the misfortune of losing for ever, in crossing the river Boyne, in which she was drowned, through the ignorance, or more culpable negligence, of a ferryman; thus closing, in the eighteenth year of her age, a life of woe in a watery tomb!

He was for some time inconsolable for the loss which he had just sustained; but, being neither of an age nor of a temper propitious to the continuation of sorrowful sensations, he hastened to Limeric, where he hoped to meet Price, his old accomplice. On his arrival in that city, he learned, that the person after whom he enquired had set out for Cork ten days before, and thither our adventurer followed him; and there he found him, within less than an hour after he entered the town-gates. On their meeting, it was agreed on by them never to think more of the stage; a resolution which was the more easily executed, as the company, to which they belonged originally, was now broken up and dispersed. It was besides settled between them, that Price should pass for Barrington's servant; and that Barrington should act the part of a young gentleman of large fortune, and of a noble family, who was not yet quite of age, but, until he should attain that period, travelled for his amusement. In pursuance of this hopeful scheme, horses were purchased, and the master and man were in every respect properly equipped to act their several parts. During the summer and autumn of the year 1772, they attended, in these characters, all the races in the southern counties of Ireland, where they were uncommonly successful, not only in obtaining large sums of money by picking pockets, but by escaping detection, or even suspicion. When the winter

ter set in, they withdrew, with a booty of near one thousand pounds, to Cork, where they designed to take up their head quarters, until the beginning of the next spring; and here it was that Barrington first affected to lead the life of a man of *Bon Ton*, of a young fellow of fashion; that is to say, to run the usual career of amour, intrigue, and debauchery, of gaming, drinking, and fighting; indispensable requisites in the character of a man of the *Ton* in Ireland: in short, to gratify all the suggestions of vanity, profligacy, and whim. But, amidst all this dissipation, neither he nor his trusty valet neglected any opportunity that offered of plundering with security; and they were sometimes, though not always, successful. It was, however, at length, the fate of Price to be detected in the very act of picking the pocket of the Right Hon. H—— K——, towards the conclusion of that winter; and for this offence he was taken into custody immediately, tried in the course of a few days, convicted, and sentenced to be transported to America for seven years.

Barrington did not remain in Cork, to be an idle and useless spectator of these proceedings. On the first news of the apprehension of his servant, he, without hesitation or loss of time, packed the most valuable part of his property, took horse, and made the best of his way to Dublin; taking leave abruptly of the great commercial capital of the province of Munster. On his arrival in Dublin, he lived rather in a private and retired manner, only lurking, in the darkest evenings, about the play-houses, where he occasionally picked up a few guineas, or a watch, &c. But he was soon weary of the sameness, and disgusted with the obscurity, of a life of retirement, such as that he led in the Irish capital; so that, when the spring came on, he went to the races, which usually are at that season of the year in the counties to the southward of Dublin. It was, however, his misfortune, at one of the races in the county of Carlow, to be seen picking the pocket of Lord B——, near whom he happened to stand. The stolen property was found in his possession, and restored immediately to the owner of it; who, being content with the restitution of it, and on seeing the discipline of the course inflicted on the pilferer, declined

elined all prosecution of him. And thus, through the ill-judged and ill-timed lenity of this nobleman, did Barrington escape that punishment in Ireland, which awaited him in this country. As soon as he escaped from the race-ground, at Carlow, he took horse, and immediately set off for Dublin, where he arrived time enough that evening to dispose of all his useless property, and to make all the necessary arrangements previous to his departure from Ireland, being resolutely bent on a journey to London. Two days after he embarked on-board the Dorset yacht, which was then on the point of sailing, with the Duke of Leinster, for Parkgate; and, before the expiration of the week, he found himself, for the first time of his life, on English ground.

The summer of the year 1773 may be considered as the æra of his arrival in England, he being about eighteen years of age, and in the third year of his infamous profession of a common pick-pocket.

There were at this time three persons who had, like Barrington, taken their passage to England with Sir Alexander Schomberg, who then commanded the Dorset yacht; and the acquaintance which our adventurer formed with them, in consequence of this accidental meeting, contributed considerably to the long series of success with which he carried on his depredations in this country. Of these persons Captain W— H—n was the most distinguished, and the most immediately, though the most innocently, conducive to the fortunate execution of the pick-pocket's projects.

This young gentleman was descended from one of the most ancient, most illustrious, and most noble families in the British Empire: he served in the army, and possessed a fortune equal to his rank and birth. He was of a most amiable character; generous, open, polite, benevolent, and accomplished; perfectly well bred, and better acquainted with books than men of his age, and rank, and profession, generally are: but, unfortunately for himself, entirely ignorant of the gross ways of the world, of the artifices of designing men, and the various stratagems of intriguing women. Thus inexperienced, and unsuspecting, he became an easy dupe to the deep-laid schemes of the infamous

mons

mous adventurers, with whom it was sometimes his ill fate to become acquainted.

It did not require so much sagacity and penetration as Barrington at that time certainly possessed to see clearly into the character of Mr. H——n, and to predict the good consequences that might follow an intimacy with a young man of his rank, disposition, and family. Actuated by a sense of the utility of such a connexion, he employed all those arts of flattery and insinuation, of which he had been long a perfect master, to ingratiate himself with this gentleman; and in this design he succeeded to the utmost extent of his wishes. Young Mr. H——n was captivated by his easy address and engaging manners, so that, before they had been three days together, that unsuspecting youth reposed unlimited confidence in him; and, with the indiscretion, or impetuosity, usually characteristic of his time of life, reckoned him among the number of his fastest and most valuable friends. In order to confirm these sentiments of confidence and friendship, which were so imprudently conceived or so hastily adopted, Barrington formed an artful tale, which he told as his own story; the purport of which was, that his father was a man of a family, noble in Ireland, and illustrious in England, to which country he himself now came to study law, in one of the inns of court; more, however, to avoid the ill-natured severity of a harsh unrelenting step-mother, which rendered his paternal mansion in a great measure intolerable to him, than from any predilection for the profession in which he intended to apply himself; but the exercise of which, the ample fortune that he was heir to would render unnecessary.

This story took as well as could be desired by the inventor of it; and it was settled between him and his new friend, that he should, on his arrival in town, enter himself of the Middle Temple, where Mr. H——n had some relations, and a numerous acquaintance, to whom, he said, he should be happy to introduce a gentleman so eminently distinguished by his talents and his accomplishments, as well as by his fortune and birth, as Mr. Barrington was. Such were the handsome terms in which he expressed himself to this professed pilferer, and so great were the prepossessions in his favour!

It was also farther agreed on between them, that they should travel together to London, and they accordingly, the next day, took a post-chaise at Parkgate, and continuing their journey by easy stages through Chester, Namptwich, and Coventry, where they stopt two or three days, they arrived, by the end of the week, at the Bath Coffee-house, in Piccadilly, which, on the recommendation of Mr. H——n, who had been several times before in the metropolis, was fixed upon as their head-quarters.

As to the other two persons who came over with them in the yacht, and of whom there will be ample occasion to speak at large in the sequel of these memoirs, they travelled more humbly, but more expeditiously, and more frugally, than Mr. H——n and Barrington; for, on the third day after their departure from the place at which they landed from Ireland, they arrived at the Golden-Cross, at Charing-Cross, with the Chester stage-coach, at a very moderate expence.

Though Barrington, on his leaving Dublin, made a very genteel appearance for a traveller or a country gentleman, yet it was indispensably necessary to expend a considerable sum, in order to enable him to appear in a manner suited to the character which he had assumed in such a capital as London; for, having represented himself as a young man of family and fortune, he must, to be consistent, dress and live like one of rank and fashion. Of this he was perfectly sensible, and he spared no expence to procure all the various articles which are holden forth as essential in the composition of a genteel well-dressed man. In conversation, however, he artfully spoke of objects of this nature with great indifference or contempt, affectedly holding forth the superior excellence of an enlarged and cultivated understanding; probably because such language flattered his vanity, fondly imagining that he was drawing his own character and exciting the admiration of his hearers, who, as is generally the case, were ready enough to approve of his opinion on this head.

But, however this may be, the expensive manner in which he lived with Mr. H——n, and those to whose acquaintance that

that gentleman introduced him, all of them gay, sprightly, young fellows, who had money at command, in less than a month reduced the funds, which Barrington had brought with him, to about twenty guineas; which seemed to afford him a very inconsiderable resource. He therefore resolutely determined to procure a supply of money by some means or other. One evening, while he was deliberating with himself on the choice of experiments to recruit his finances, he was interrupted in his meditations on the subject by the arrival of Mr. H——n and a party of his friends, who proposed to them to accompany them to Ranelagh. Their proposal was, without much hesitation, acceded to by Barrington; and they, without farther loss of time, ordered coaches to set them down at that celebrated place of amusement.

This being the first time of his visiting it, every thing he saw about it was new to him; but the mortifying reflection of the poverty upon which he so closely verged, at this time, banished all those pleasing sensations which novelty, and splendor, and music, and gay company, usually excite in unembarrassed minds. Nothing that he heard, or that he beheld, was capable of taking him off from the thoughts of his present situation.

Walking about in this serious mood, of which the melancholy was heightened by the gay scenes that surrounded him, he chanced to espy the two companions of his voyage in the Dorset yacht, to whom he only made a slight bow of recognition; and, in less than a quarter of an hour afterwards, he saw the Duke of L——r, engaged deeply in conversation with two ladies, and a Knight of the Bath, who it afterwards turned out was Sir W—— D——; and near these he placed himself, quitting, for a short time, the company to which he belonged.

While he was thus stationed, an opportunity, which he considered a fair one, offered itself of making a good booty; and he availed himself of it. He picked the D——'s pocket of above eighty pounds, Sir W——'s of five and thirty guineas, one of the ladies of her watch; with all which he got off undiscovered, and joined Mr. H——n, and his party, as if nothing had happened out of the ordinary and common course of things in such places as Ranelagh.

Though

Though it may be reasonably presumed, that Barrington, after so many years practice, and so long experience in the infamous calling which he exercised, performed his part of this business with much dexterity and skill; yet it was not done with such a degree of privacy and art as to elude the observation of one of the persons who came with him, in the Dorset, from Ireland to Parkgate. This man, who was an adept himself, took a convenient opportunity, in the course of the evening, of letting him know that he was a witness of his conduct; and that, unless terms were made with him, and share of the spoil given to him, he determined to communicate his knowledge of the transaction to the persons who had been robbed of their property. The language which he held was very authoritative, and his manner was too commanding and decisive to be resisted; so that Barrington, yielding to the necessity of the case, consented to what was asked of him, and, under pretence of sudden indisposition, he returned with his new associate to town; and there, at the Golden-Cross Inn, at Charing-Cross, the booty acquired at Kanelagh was fairly, though not equally, divided; the new intruder contenting himself with taking the lady's watch, chain, &c. which were of gold, and a ten pound bank-note; leaving all the rest of the money and bank paper with him who had originally taken it.

But, in order to cement the connexion which these two were now on the point of forming, Mr. James (for, by that that feigned name this new accomplice is to be henceforth called) insisted upon Barrington's supping with him; and, while the supper was preparing, he related to him the outlines of his story; which, though not immediately connected with the subject of these memoirs, it may not be improper to repeat in this place, and which was to the following purport.

He said that his real name was William S——r, and that he was born in the county of Norfolk, where his father possessed an estate of about three hundred pounds a year. This estate, and the mansion of it, were situated in the neighbourhood of a nobleman of great influence in parliament, and of a considerable weight in the cabinet. The heir of his family and young S——r were nearly of the same

same age, and for some time were schoolfellows. These circumstances produced an intimacy between them; and in the progress of it, he, who was now a common thief, had made considerable advances in the favour and esteem of the young nobleman, who, when he was sent upon his travels, solicited him to accompany him. The father and friends of S——r, thinking that the patronage of a minister of state might contribute much more to his promotion than the utmost diligence that they could use in pursuit of it, consented to the request; and, accordingly, he went abroad with the young Lord H——, who, on their way home, after six years absence, was attacked by a fever, which, in less than ten days, put a period to his life. This unfortunate event was soon after followed by one still more fatal. The nobleman, on whom all his hopes depended, was removed from office, and deprived of all his employments. But a piece of intelligence, which he received on his arrival in England, was worse, and rendered his situation more calamitous than all the former crosses and disappointments of his life. This was, that his father's affairs were, through extravagance and ill-management, so embroiled, that, when the debts, due by him, were discharged, there was scarcely a sufficiency left to maintain him. All these distressing circumstances were considerably aggravated by the conduct which the nobleman, who was in honor bound to patronize him, held towards him, on this melancholy and unforeseen reverse of fortune. This thorough-paced courtier refused to see him, denied most of the promises that he had made to him, and left him, in solitude and in the most extreme indigence, to curse his folly, and to repent of his credulity.

This unbecoming treatment at first overwhelmed him with affliction and despair. These, however, in a little time subsided, and made way for the active sentiments of indignation and resentment; and, abandoning his native country for ever, he came to London, with what little property he had left, literally, as he expresses it, to seek his fortune. For this purpose, he unhappily had recourse to the gaming-table, at which, in less than a week, he was completely ruined. The transition from the dice-box to

the road is frequent enough, and by no means unnatural. Plundered by sharpers at hazard in Leicester-fields, he resolved to recruit his finances on Finchley-common and Hounslow-heath. In short, he went upon the highway, and robbed for some time with tolerable success, and without meeting any disagreeable accident, until attempting, in company with another person, to rob a gentleman on Epsom-green, near Egham, he was shot through the body, and narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the officers of justice. In this instance, however, more fortunate than his ill-fated accomplice, who was taken, and soon after executed on Kennington-common.

S—r was a long time confined to his room, in consequence of the wound he received; and, during the period of his convalescence, he made many serious reflections on his conduct. Sentiments of penitence and remorse seemed to be awakened in him. In short, he determined, in case Providence ever should restore him to health, to employ his life entirely in making some atonement for his former dissolute actions. With this laudable resolution, he, on his recovery, returned to town from Weymouth, in Buckinghamshire, where, during his illness, he resided at the house of a relation.

Having received a liberal education, being master of two or three modern languages, and not unacquainted with the world, he did not doubt of being able to procure some employment in so vast a capital as London, whereby he might be enabled to support himself honestly. But his hopes on this head, however sanguine, were grievously disappointed; for, with all the exertions he could make, the want of character, of friends to recommend him, or of acquaintance to refer to, always prevented him from succeeding in any one of the many and repeated applications that he made to get a place of any kind, by which he might earn his bread honestly. He endeavoured to be tutor in a private family, to be usher to a school, to be writer for a newspaper, to be translator for a bookseller, to be interpreter for foreign sea-captains, to be clerk at a coal-wharf, waiter at a tavern, or porter at an inn; but all to no purpose. He endeavoured to be even a recruiting corporal for the East-India Company; but without success.

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He tried every line, and every line failed him: he knocked at every door, and every door was shut against him. Much time was spent by him, in thus attempting to get employment; and, what was worse, all his money was spent too. Whatever he had of any value was pawned; and, at last, he was forced to sell the very clothes he wore, in order to procure bread to eat. But still, though half famished, and half naked, though rambling in the brick-fields by day, and sleeping under a hedge, or in the ashes of a glass-house by night, he persevered in his resolutions of living uprightly, without ever entertaining a thought of returning to his former evil courses. This life he led, and in this temper he continued for above a week, when the devil put it into his head to reason about God and Providence, and the physical order of the universe and the moral world. While he was meditating on this subject, in doubt, and fear, and uncertainty, he was accosted by one Wheeler, a sharper, (since executed at York for robbery,) whom he had known at one of those houses in the neighbourhood of Covent-Garden, to which men of such a description usually resorted at that time, and where he himself, while in the practice of robbing on the highway, generally spent his evenings. This man, though a professed cheat and thief, was not destitute of feeling or generosity: such virtues as these shew themselves in persons of his stamp: and he was struck with astonishment and compassion at seeing, in such a wretched plight, a man whom he had known some time before make a genteel figure. However, without moralizing much on the matter, he shook him by the hand, took him home to dinner with him, relieved his most pressing distresses by a seasonable supply of clothes, with a little money, and engaged him to return to him the next day, when, he said, that something more should be done for him.

S——r did not fail to attend the appointment, penetrated with a deep sense of gratitude for the kindness shewn to him, and the favours conferred on him by his old acquaintance; and he was punctually, by the fixed hour, at Wheeler's apartments in Duke-street, Westminster, where he again dined. After dinner was over, his friendly host,
without

without ceremony or preface, told him, that he had a proposal to make to him, which, if accepted, would turn out of great and certain advantage to both parties. The proposal was, to dress himself completely as a clergyman, with a gown, scarf, band, &c. all which he, Wheeler, would provide for him, with whatever else should be necessary to enable him to go into polite company. That, being a remarkably good figure, used to the world, conversant in foreign languages, and master of an elegant address, he should, dressed in the manner proposed, go to court on the King's birth-day, which would be in the course of the week, and there endeavour to get at the purses, pocket-books, or watches, of some of the company; which he might, on that day, in that place, appearing as he would, effectually do with security and ease.

The proposal startled, but did not displease, S——r. The scheme seemed plausible enough. Friendship invited, and want urged him on; so that he agreed to do what Wheeler proposed, and to commence pick-pocket in form, at St. James's, the next public day.

Every thing being got ready for the purpose, he repaired thither in the character of a dignitary of the Church, on the fourth of June, and was so bold, so adroit, or so successful, in the exercise of this new profession, that he retired in the evening to Wheeler's, in Westminster, with money, watches, jewels, pocket-books, and their contents, &c. to the amount of upwards of four hundred pounds.

This extraordinary success, and the apparent security with which the business he entered upon might be transacted, gave him a relish for his new profession, and made him eager for plunder. And as for his scruples, if he still retained any, Mr. Wheeler's arguments, the pleasures of the town, and the sight of his share of the booty effectually quelled them. During the remainder of that summer, and the whole of the ensuing autumn, he visited Tunbridge, Buxton, Weymouth, Brighthelmstone, and some other bathing or watering places, always in the exercise of his newly-adopted calling, and still successful, being hitherto neither detected nor even suspected; so that he returned
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to London, in the beginning of the winter, with near five hundred pounds, which he had remaining, after living in a very elegant and expensive style the whole preceding season.

On his arrival in town, he laid aside the garb and appearance of a parson; and appeared in the uniform of an officer of the army. Dressed in regimentals, he frequented the play-houses, the opera, and other polite places of public amusement; and continued to pick pockets without detection, until he fell in, at Covent-Garden play house, with Monsieur François, then secretary to the French embassy at the Court of London. This gentleman caught him in the very fact of picking his pocket, in the lobby of that theatre; and he was immediately given in charge to a constable, who took him into a neighbouring public-house, preparatory to his taking him to the watch-house, it being then at too unseasonable an hour to take him before a magistrate. Having a considerable sum of money about him, he found means, with a very small part of it, to bribe his keeper, who suffered him, for twenty guineas, to escape. Immediately, on recovering of his liberty, he set out for France, with all the money he could command; and, having rambled about that kingdom for two years, he went into Spain, where he remained some time, and thence he sailed to Cork, in Ireland. In that kingdom he remained but a few months; for, several years having elapsed since his detection by the French secretary, and no proceedings being carried on against him during his absence, he determined to return to London, in perfect confidence of safety, Monsieur François having long before left England, and retired into his own country; and the whole transaction, which occasioned the precipitate flight of the pick-pocket, having been, in all probability, long since totally forgotten.

Such were the outlines of Mr. James's variegated story, which Barrington heard with no small degree of pleasure.

Nor was it without good reason that he heard the narrative of S——r, now known by the name of James, his new acquaintance, with a good degree of satisfaction; for, being himself entirely ignorant of the town, he was sensible that the acquaintance of a man, who had so perfect a knowledge

knowledge of it as James possessed, could not but be extremely useful to him in the line of life which he pursued; as without some such connexion it would be difficult for him to dispose, with any safety, of such articles of value as might fall in his way in the course of his predatory excursions. So true it is, that, without receivers of stolen goods, the depredations of thieves must be, in a great measure, confined to cash, and, consequently, be inconsiderable.

Barrington therefore proposed to him, that they should enter into a kind of partnership, and carry on the business of picking pockets as a joint concern; a proposal to which James affected to scruple agreeing, as inconsistent with the tenderness of his conscience. His conscience, however, was soon made easy, by his friend's jocularly reminding him of Captain Rolando's observations to Gil Blas, that all men are desirous to appropriate to themselves their neighbours property. Sovereigns seize on the territories of neighbouring princes, whenever they think doing so suits their purposes, without scruple or remorse; people of fashion run in debt and never pay their creditors; bankers and brokers are seldom restrained by conscience in the interest they take, or the charges which they make; merchants, and traders of all kinds, are not more scrupulous in the profits which they exact of their unwary customers; and, as for lawyers of every denomination, their boundless rapacity is proverbial. The *mode* then of appropriating the property to one's self, and not the *act* of doing so, is the sole difference, between the most noted pick-pocket and the most powerful prince or the most opulent merchant. Such was the argument of this crafty adventurer, who persuaded James to accede to the terms, which he proposed, of carrying on business together, notwithstanding the delicacy of his conscience; so that, the preliminaries being thus settled, it was agreed upon, that they should meet the next day at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand; and there, after they had dined, finally settle the definitive articles of the treaty, and also, the plan of their future operations. Matters being left in this state, the meeting broke up, and Barrington returned by midnight to his lodgings at the Bath Coffee house, where, luckily

luckily enough, neither Captain H——n nor any of his party happened yet to have arrived from Ranelagh.

The next morning, at breakfast, he informed his friend Mr. H——n, that, on his return last night, he chanced to meet a very worthy relation of his, Sir Fitzwilliam Barrington, who engaged him to dine with him that day, so that it would be out of his power to make one of the party that were to spend the day at the Thatched-house Tavern; but that, however, he would endeavour to join them early in the evening, and stay to supper with them, if they were bent upon keeping it up to a late hour.

Barrington dressed, called a coach, and drove to the Crown and Anchor Tavern, where he found Mr. James, who had been for some time waiting for him. Dinner being dispatched, and the servants withdrawn, these worthy gentlemen entered on the business. And here it was agreed upon between them, that whatever either of them acquired should be equally divided between them; and that, on the sale of watches, jewels, or any other articles that they might have to dispose of, they should be both present. Thus no suspicion of fraud could be entertained: and thus Barrington got what he greatly wanted, an introduction to a receiver of stolen goods. It was farther settled by them, that while Mr. H——n remained in town, they should take care not to be seen publicly together, and that Mr. James should resume his long-neglected character of a clergyman. These and other weighty points being adjusted to the satisfaction of the parties, it was determined, that they should meet regularly on Tuesdays and Fridays, to settle with each other; but never to meet twice at the same house. Having then adjourned to the next Tuesday, and fixed on the Devil Tavern, at Temple-bar, our adventurers separated, Barrington going to the Thatched house Tavern. There he arrived about eight in the afternoon, and found his friend, Mr. H——n, and a large party of his acquaintance, rather far gone in liquor. Most of them knew him personally, and considering him in the light in which he was represented to them by Captain H——n, as a young man of condition, they were delighted with his company. And, indeed, the fact is, that at that period of his life, when his character in this country was unsullied and un-

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suspected,

suspected, the engaging urbanity of his manners, the politeness of his address, and the genteel style of his conversation, rendered his company acceptable wherever he was introduced.

His presence pleased the company, who were a good deal heated by wine; and who, when in their soberest moments, were more distinguished for spirit and generosity than for prudence or discretion. A man of his temper and sagacity did not neglect to avail himself of the advantages which their intoxication presented; and he accordingly plundered those of them without any scruple, but not before the reckoning was called for and the bill discharged.

This done, he and his friend Mr. H——n withdrew, and returned home to their lodging in Piccadilly, no one entertaining any suspicion of the honour of Mr. Barrington, or of the depredations committed by him that night.

The booty taken by him on this occasion was great: but, as the spoil consisted more of watches, and other trinkets, than of cash, he was obliged to have recourse to his accomplice Mr. James to turn it into specie. He, therefore, early the next morning, called upon that profligate adventurer, who introduced him to a man, by whose means the stolen articles were quickly disposed of, for what appeared to be an equitable price; and the money arising from the sale of them was, according to agreement, equally divided.

A minute detail of the mean artifices or base exploits of a professed pick-pocket, can afford very little instruction or entertainment to a liberal or enlightened mind. It will, therefore, on this head, be sufficient to observe, that, as Barrington advanced in years, he continued the exercise of his scandalous profession, and improved in the practice of it, but he, at the same time, advanced in reputation; for, he continued to cultivate his mind, and that with a degree of assiduity unexampled in one of his calling. He was remarkable for retaining very faithfully what he collected with great ease. One practice he ever had, which was easily observed. If any thought, or image, presented itself to his mind, that he could use or improve, he did not suffer it to be lost; but, amidst the jollity of a tavern,

or in the warmth of an interesting conversation, he very diligently committed it to paper.

This quality, among other social and amiable qualities, which he possessed, at that time, in an eminent degree, rendered him a kind of popular character.

In the course of his depredations, he, in the summer of the year 1775, visited the watering places; and, among the rest, he went to Brighton, which at that time, though frequented by very genteel company, was far from having arrived at the celebrity which it has since acquired.

However, he here became acquainted, and intimate, with the late Duke of Ancaſter, Lord Ferrers, and Thomas Lord Lyttleton, with ſeveral other of the connexions of theſe noble perſons; who all conſidered him as a man of genius and ability, (which he was,) and as a gentleman of fortune, and noble family, (which he as certainly was not.)

But, however this may be, from Brightheľmſtone he made an excursion to Chicheſter, in company with Lord L—— and Sir Alexander Leith, who lived at that time in the county of Suſſex. While he reſided in that city, he was ſhewn the curioſities of the cathedral, in themſelves certainly inſignificant and uninteresting enough. Among them was pointed out to him a family-vault, for the interment of the Dukes of Richmond, which was erected ſome years before, by the late Duke, and inſcribed:

“ Domus ultima.”

On this, the following epigram is ſaid to have been written by him, which being not deſtitute of merit, in that agreeable ſpecies of compoſition, is here given.

Did he, who thus inſcrib'd this wall,
Not *read*, or not *believe*, St. Paul?
Who ſays, “ There is, where-e'er it ſtands,
“ *Another* houſe, not made with hands.”
Or, ſhall we gather, from theſe words,
That *houſe* is not a *houſe* of Lords?

On his return to London, in the beginning of the winter of the year 1775, his way of life, and the nature of his pursuits, naturally connected him with the gay and the dissolute, the thoughtless and the licentious. He affected all the airs of a young fellow of fashion, and all the extravagances of a professed man of pleasure. He divided his time between the pursuit of fashionable amusements and the infamous occupation of picking pockets. But these two objects did not entirely occupy his time or his attention. The seasons of plundering and of dissipation were succeeded by intervals of retirement and study. In these, which sometimes lasted for several weeks, he shut himself up, and devoted himself to the study of the best writers in the English language, the only one with which he was acquainted; and he had, in an eminent degree, this peculiarity, that, when he was the man of the world, the sprightly wit, the agreeable companion, he had not entirely lost sight of books and literature.

In these moments of leisure and reflection he composed an ode to **LIGHT**, not, indeed, regular in its construction, nor of an artificial texture; but certainly not void of merit, and indicative of no small degree of genius.

In the course of this winter he happened accidentally to fall in with one Lowe, a very singular and extraordinary character, with whom he formed an intimate connexion; employing him in the useful capacity of a receiver of stolen goods, which he had frequent occasions to dispose of.

This Lowe had been originally a livery-servant, but who now kept a public-house, in which he scraped up some money; he then commenced usurer, and, by that vile business, acquired a small fortune, and assumed the character of a gentleman. He afterwards took a genteel house in the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury-square, where he resided to the time of his death. He was, for one whose mind was entirely uncultivated, a man of uncommon address. He, in general, passed for a very charitable and benevolent character, having performed many acts of beneficence through motives of policy or ostentation; and he was a subscriber to most of the public charities, in or about town, in order to give the world a high opinion of his exemplary

emplary virtues and generous feelings. By arts of this kind, he found means to get himself appointed to the station of treasurer, or chief conductor, of a new hospital, for the reception of blind patients, at Kentish-town; in which capacity, it is said, that he got into the possession of upwards of five thousand pounds. But, having been suspected of setting fire to that building, he was apprehended at Liverpool, in the year 1779; and, to avoid the punishment due to the enormity of his offence, he poisoned himself, and lies buried in a cross-road in the neighbourhood of Prescot, in Lancashire.

This connexion with Lowe rendered that with Mr. James, in a great measure, unnecessary; and Barrington was the more willing to break with him, as some recent and unpleasant altercations had taken place between them: the truth is, that James, though engaged in a most disgraceful course of life, possessed learning and abilities, and was not entirely destitute of a sense of honour or of a regard to moral obligation. But Barrington, who had at all times the very highest opinion of his own merit, was used to treat him with unbecoming freedom; and, on some occasions, with indecent insolence. In short, though he had great merit, he had also many great failings, if considered as a social companion; and the entire dissolution of his connexion with the subject of these memoirs was ultimately beneficial to James; for, at this time, he (James) lives in a monastery in Westphalia, to which he some years ago retired, in an enviable state of peace and penitence, respected for his talents, and loved for his amiable manners, by which he is distinguished in an eminent degree. To him the editor of these memoirs is indebted, for the power of communicating these minute memorials of the life of George Barrington to the public; and to his conversation he is indebted for the knowledge of the story of that singular and extraordinary adventurer.

Barrington, on his forming a connexion with Lowe, advanced with new audacity in the exercise of his practices as a pick-pocket. His reputation for genius and literature supported him in the opinion of his acquaintance, and their good opinion of him considerably facilitated the success

success of his depredations; for, by their countenance and introduction, he got access to the company of young men of affluence, whose unguarded and unsuspected character offered to him an ample field to plunder with impunity. The boldness, the indecency, and the licentiousness, of his behaviour, on some occasions, drew on him the censure of some of the most respectable of his friends. However, his failings were readily pardoned and overlooked; for, it is well known, that much will be forgiven to a man in his youth, who has the appearance of birth and fortune.

This connexion with Lowe was but a short time previous to that evening of the month of January, which is observed as the anniversary of the Queen's birth-day; it was resolved on between them, that, habited as a clergyman, he should repair to court, and there endeavour, not only to pick the pockets of some of the company, but, what was a much bolder and a much more novel attempt, to cut off the diamond orders of some of the Knights of the Garter, Bath, and Thistle, who, on such days, usually wear the collars of their respective orders. In this enterprize he succeeded beyond their most sanguine expectations; for, he found means to take the diamond order of Lord C——, with which he got away from St. James's perfectly unsuspected.

This valuable acquisition, by the assistance and agency of Lowe, he disposed of for eight hundred pounds to one Lurhan, a Dutchman, who usually made a trip from Haerlem to England, once a year, for the express purpose of purchasing jewels that had been fraudulently or feloniously obtained, and for which he gave what the sharpers, or thieves, with whom he dealt, considered an equitable price; at least, much more than the London receivers were used to give.

In the course of the winter of the year 1775, Prince Orlov, a Russian nobleman, of the first rank and consequence, visited England. The splendor in which he lived, and the high favor in which he stood at the court of Russia, were frequently noticed in the public prints; and particularly his possessing a gold snuff-box, set with brill-
liants,

liants, which was presented to him by the Empress, and which was generally valued at the enormous sum of thirty thousand pounds. This precious trinket excited, in an extraordinary manner, the attention of Barrington, and he determined to exert himself in order to get it into his possession. For this, a favourable opportunity presented itself one night at Covent-garden play-house; and this experienced pick-pocket did not neglect to avail himself of it. He contrived to be near the prince, and found means to convey the treasure from his excellency's waistcoat-pocket, in which, according to the Russian custom, it was usually carried, into his own.

This operation was not, however, performed in such a manner as to escape instant detection. For, the prince felt the attack, and, having reason to entertain some suspicion of Barrington, he immediately seized him by the collar. Such an action, in a public theatre, naturally occasioned some bustle as well as surprise; and, during the confusion that ensued, he slipped the box into the nobleman's hand, who was, doubtless, glad to have recovered it with so much facility. The thief was, however, secured, and committed to Tothill fields bridewell, for examination on the Wednesday following at Bow-street.

At the time appointed he was brought before Sir John Fielding, and examined, not only on the offence for which he was taken into custody, but also relative to his family, his profession, and his connexions. On this occasion he represented himself as a native of Ireland, where his family, he said, were affluent and respectable; that he was educated in the medical line; and that he came to London, to improve himself in the knowledge of it: all these circumstances he represented with becoming modesty, and with many tears, neither absolutely denying the crime with which he was charged at the play-house, nor formally avowing his guilt. So that, after all, the prince declining to proceed against him, and no prosecutor appearing, he was dismissed, after receiving a proper reprimand from the magistrate.

An accident of such a nature as this was could not remain long a secret in such a place as London. An account

count of it was soon circulated, and Barrington, now held up to view in the most disgraceful light of an impostor, (even from his own account of himself at Bow-street, where he passed for a surgeon,) was forsaken by the greatest part of those who, until then, countenanced him, and delighted in his company.

There were, however, some few who still respected his talents, and who, while they contemplated in him the sprightly wit and the agreeable companion, were contented to forget the pick-pocket, or, at least, were inclined to believe him innocent of the offences with which he was so publicly charged. But even of these he lost, in a little time, the countenance and support, in consequence of an act of indiscretion, not immediately connected with the habits of depredation, in which he was by this time irrevocably confirmed by a long course of successful practice.

In his pursuits as a pick-pocket, he, as has been already mentioned, visited all the genteel places of resort, and, among the rest, he occasionally attended at both Houses of Parliament, where he is said to have acquired considerable sums. Some weeks after his ignominious affair at Covent-garden, he went down to the House of Peers, where an appeal of an interesting nature was, on that day, to be heard and determined. As public curiosity was a good deal excited by this cause, a great number of people attended to hear the event of the decision of it. Among these there was one Mr. G——, who knew our adventurer.

This gentleman immediately informed Mr. Quarme, the deputy gentleman-usher of the black-rod, that the person, who had been so lately before detected in the act of picking the pocket of Prince Orlow, was then in the lobby of the House, probably for the purpose of renewing his depredations. On this information being communicated to the deputy black-rod, Barrington was sought after, and turned out by the officers, who informed him of the cause of their conduct towards him, and of the name of their informant against him.

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This disagreeable incident filled him with inexpressible rage and indignation, particularly against Mr. G—; and he, with great indiscretion, vowed in public to revenge it. Intelligence of the resolution, and of the menaces which dictated it, being conveyed to Mr. G—, he made application to a magistrate, who granted a warrant to take the pick-pocket into custody, and to bind him over to keep the peace. In consequence of this warrant he was taken up, and, for want of proper sureties, he was committed to his former apartments in Tothill-fields Bridewell, where he remained for a considerable time confined, from his inability to procure the bail that was required. During his imprisonment the whole of his story was industriously circulated, probably not without some aggravation; so that, on his procuring his enlargement, his character was completely blasted. The entry to all decent company was absolutely shut against him; and he was set down as a professed impostor and a common pick-pocket.

From this time forward, he was obliged to descend to all the mean practices and arts of a common and professed pilferer.

But, even in the humble line of infamous depredation, in which he was thus reduced to move, he was, in less than three months, discovered; and having been detected in the fact of stealing a silver watch, of inconsiderable value, from a woman of low condition, at Drury-lane play-house, he was indicted; and, having been tried at the Old-bailey, he was there convicted, and sentenced to hard labour, on the river Thames, for the term of three years.

In consequence of this sentence, he was, early in the year 1777, removed from Newgate to Woolwich, where he was put on-board one of the hulks.

In this receptacle of wretchedness and vice, he found himself exposed to such complicated misery as he had never before known; and to such fatal diseases as he had never before felt. He was fatigued with hard labour, and harrassed with all the evils of indigence, confinement, and obloquy; yet he bore up against all the weight of woe, under which he laboured, with a degree of patience, resignation,

signation, and constancy, worthy of a better cause than that in which he suffered. Fortune at length declared in his favour, and freedom became the recompence of his exemplary conduct during the period of his captivity; for, on the recommendation of Messrs. Erskine and Duncan Campbell, the superintendants or governors of the convicts, a pardon was granted to him; and, after somewhat less than a twelvemonth's severe sufferings on the Thames, he was set at large.

It may well be supposed, that his residence in the neighbourhood of Woolwich, or the conversation of the unhappy criminals with whom he was obliged to associate during his captivity there, did not contribute to reform his morals or to establish his character for integrity. The fact is, that, as soon as he procured his liberty, he returned to London, and reverted with increased industry to the practice of the crimes for which he had been so recently punished.

But he was, by this time, too much noted by the town to be allowed to proceed long, with impunity, in the infamous career which he had chosen to run. In less than half a year after his enlargement from the hulks he was again detected, by the vigilance of one Payne, at that time a very active peace-officer in the city, in the fact of picking pockets in St. Sepulchre's church, during the time of the celebration of divine service before the Humane Society. And, having been convicted of this offence at the Old-bailey, he was a second time sentenced to hard labour on the Thames, and that for the term of five years.

Upon his trial, on this occasion, it was that he appeared to have first distinguished himself as a public speaker. He endeavoured, with much art, but without any success, to work upon the feelings of the court and jury; but the proofs against him were so clear, that he was found guilty; and, pursuant to his sentence, he was removed once more to the hulks at Woolwich, about the middle of the year 1778.

When he was this second time put on-board one of these prison-ships, he either found his sufferings more intolerable, or his situation to be more desperate, than they appeared

appeared to him on his first confinement; a circumstance which is said to have made him engage in a variety of schemes to effect an escape.

All which plans the vigilance of his keepers rendered abortive. And the repeated disappointments experienced by him, in these efforts to gain his liberty, affected his spirits to such a degree, that he determined upon suicide; and, in consequence of this impious resolution, he stabbed himself with a penknife. The wound, though deep and dangerous, did not prove mortal; and, medical assistance being called in, a cure was effected. It was, however, effected very slowly, and the wound, having been given in the breast, seemed, in its effects, after near two years continuance, to bring on a consumption, and there seemed to be no other prospect before him but that of a lingering and a miserable death.

While he remained in this deplorable situation, it happened, fortunately for him, that Sir M—— L——, a gentleman of rank and consequence, happened to visit the hulks, and to enquire into the state of the convicts. This gentleman, who was of the most benevolent character, and possessed of the most feeling heart, was led by curiosity to converse with Barrington; and his emaciated and squalid appearance so moved him with compassion, that he applied for a remission of the remaining part of his sentence; which was granted, on condition of his immediately leaving England on his enlargement, and never more returning to it. And, in order to enable him to fulfil his promise, a sum of money was given to him to defray the expence of his journey to Ireland, his native country.

On his obtaining his freedom, he returned to London; where, however, he had the prudent precaution of staying no longer than he conceived to be absolutely necessary to procure such a sufficiency of money or valuables as might enable him to appear at Dublin in the character of a gentleman. By an extraordinary piece of good fortune, he was enabled, by a booty of near a hundred pounds, in cash, bank-notes, and watches, which he got in the course of the week after his arrival from Woolwich, to effect this; which was no sooner completed, than he took

a place in the Chester stage-coach, and, in less than six days afterward, arrived safely in the Irish capital; from which he had been now so many years absent that he considered himself as totally forgotten in it.

But his hopes of living long in Dublin, entirely unknown and unsuspected, soon turned out to be one of those imaginary prospects, with which he was frequently accustomed to amuse himself. He happened to fall in with several persons who recollected his person in London, and who were well acquainted with his story; and he was, by this time, in every point of view, so striking or so notorious a character, that to be known and to be suspected was one and the same thing.

Continuing his vicious practices, in his own country, with a degree of industry and audacity not inferior to what he had exercised on this side the water, he was, in the course of a little time, taken into custody, by the officers of the Irish police, for picking the pocket of a nobleman of a gold watch, together with some money, at one of the play-houses, and he was committed to the New Goal, to take his trial for that offence.

The prosecution not being managed on this occasion with much vigour, or, perhaps, the evidence not being sufficiently clear to establish the guilt of the prisoner, he was acquitted, and discharged, after having been seriously admonished by the judge before whom he was tried.

In the course of this trial, he addressed the court and jury in a very animated manner; adverting, with great art, to what he called the unaccountable force of the prejudices that were so unjustly entertained against him in the sister-country, even after he had been discharged, *as a reformed character*, from a place which the legislature formally and expressly declares to have been appointed for the express purpose of operating the reformation of young offenders, and rendering them useful and respectable members of the commonwealth. "Gentlemen, (added he, in conclusion,) I solemnly declare that I am not guilty of the charge now brought against me; nor does the evidence produced apply to me. Thus, supported by conscious innocence, I wait for your verdict, without any painful apprehension, as
knowing

knowing that, to men of your liberality of sentiment, I am not an object of those prejudices that operated so fatally against me in another place; and that your decree will be the result of feeling hearts, directed by enlightened understandings."

But, though acquitted on this occasion in Dublin, he quickly determined to leave Ireland, of which the capital seemed to him to be a theatre of action too circumscribed for him to move in. He accordingly removed to the northern parts of that kingdom, through which he took his way to Edinburgh, where he concluded that he might, for some time at least, commit his depredations with greater safety and facility than he could do either in London or Dublin.

But in his opinion on this head he soon learned, by experience, that he was grossly deceived, for he was quickly observed in the capital of Scotland, where the police is more exact and more severe than in most other parts of the British dominions. Being observed, he was suspected; but, having received some intimation of the suspicions that were entertained of him, he thought it prudent to depart from Edinburgh, where his gleanings were comparatively small.

The smallness, however, of his acquisitions in Scotland was amply compensated for by the extraordinary success of his depredations at Chester Fair, which he visited on his return to England through Carlisle; for, it is said, that, in the course of this expedition to that linen fair, he contrived to get into his possession to the amount of six hundred pounds in cash and bank-notes, with which he got clear off, returning once more to London, to which he seems to have been attracted by a kind of unaccountable fatality.

On his arrival here, he lived in a genteel but retired manner, in the neighbourhood of Soho square. It was about this time, that, leaning against a post, and viewing the fire, in Greek-street, a stack of chimneys fell and fractured his skull—of which accident, however, he got completely cured, being reserved, we fear (as the proverb goes) unless he at last feels the necessity of reformation, for a more shameful end. He continued to observe a quiet and decent way of life while the spoils of Chetter Fair afforded him the means.

But

But the produce of these spoils being neatly exhausted in the course of some months, he returned to his old courses, notwithstanding the additional danger which attended his public appearance to resume them, from the terms in which he was liberated from his confinement on board the hulks; which were, on condition of his leaving this kingdom, and never more returning to it.

However, unterrified by the danger, he again frequented the Theatres, the Opera-house and the Pantheon, for some little time, with tolerable success; but he became now too notorious to be long secure; and, being recognized, he was closely watched and well-nigh detected at the latter of these places; at least, such strong suspicions were entertained by the magistrates of his conduct on the occasion that he was taken into custody, and committed to Newgate.

The evidence against him, however, was far from being clear enough to convict him of the offence with which he was then charged; so that, of course, he got rid of the consequences without much difficulty or risque. He was, however, detained at the instance of Mr. Duncan Campbell, the superintendant of the convicts, for having returned to England, in violation of the condition on which his Majesty was pleased to grant him a remission of the punishment, which he was sentenced to undergo on-board the hulks at Woolwich; and the consequence of the detainer was, that he was ordered to serve out in Newgate the unexpired part of the time that he was originally to have served on the river Thames. When the period of his captivity in this prison expired, he was, as a matter of course, set at liberty; and he no sooner obtained his liberty, than he returned to his former practices. He, however, was now more cautious; and, being connected with some very adroit accomplices, he was not so easily detected as he used to be on former occasions.

He was, nevertheless, strongly suspected. Hence it came to pass, that he lived in a state of perpetual alarm, was exposed to frequent interruptions, and was several times taken into custody, but as repeatedly discharged for want of proofs to bring the guilt home to him.

In this manner he lived a considerable time, in the society of the most profligate and abandoned characters of this vast and corrupt town, when he was seen to pick the pocket of Mr. le Mesurier, at Drury-lane play-house; and for that offence he was immediately apprehended.

Charge of him was given to one Blandy, a constable, who, either through negligence or corruption, suffered him to make his escape. The proceedings against him were, however, carried on to an outlawry, and various methods were ineffectually taken, for near two years, to have him apprehended.

While the lawyers were outlawing him, and the constables endeavouring to take him, he was travelling in various disguises, and in various characters, through the northern counties of this kingdom. He visited the great towns, in those parts, as a Quack Doctor, or as a Clergyman; sometimes he went with an EO table, and sometimes he pretended to be a rider to a manufacturing house at Birmingham or Manchester; and travelling on horse-back, with a decent appearance and a grave deportment, the account which he thought proper to give of him was credited, without any difficulty, by those who thought proper to question him.

It, however, sometimes happened that he was known by gentlemen whom he met, particularly once in Lincolnshire, but no one offered to molest or interrupt him, until he arrived at Newcastle upon Tyne, where, on being recognized, he was suspected of picking pockets, and, on enquiry, he was found to be outlawed; on which he was removed, by a writ of *Habeas Corpus*, to London, and imprisoned in Newgate, where he arrived poor, emaciated, and dejected.

The companions of his life, as a distinguished character in his line, however, on learning his circumstances, made a subscription for him, by which they collected near an hundred guineas for his use; and, by this seasonable supply, he was enabled to employ counsel, and to take measures to have the outlawry reversed.

This being done, he was tried for the original offence, that of stealing Mr. Le Mesurier's purse; but, through the absence of the Rev. Mr. Adeane, a material witness for the prosecution, he was acquitted and discharged. On

On his getting his liberty he went into Ireland, in company with a young man of the name of Hubert, well known in town for his fraud on his Royal Highness the Duke of York. With this accomplice he endeavoured to carry on his depredations in Dublin, where it was never his fortune to remain for any length of time undetected. For, on this occasion, Hubert was taken in the fact of picking a gentleman's pocket, and handing the property to Barrington, who, with great difficulty, made his escape to England, where he rambled about for some time, previous to his arrival in the capital; and he had not been long in London, or the neighbourhood of it, when he was taken into custody for picking the pocket of Mr. Henry Hare Townsend.

As for Hubert, he was tried and convicted at Dublin, and sentenced to be transported for seven years; but having, since then, contrived to make his escape from the prison in which he was confined, he is said to be now lurking at large.

ON Wednesday morning, September 15, 1790, Barrington was arraigned for stealing, on the 1st of September, a gold watch, chain, and seals, and a metal key, the property of Henry Hare Townsend, Esq.

When he was asked, as usual, by the clerk of the arraigns, whether he was guilty or not guilty of the felony with which he stood charged, he addressed Mr. Recorder (the only Judge on the bench) as follows:

“ My Lord,

“ It is with great concern that I interrupt the business of the court for a single moment, but I am under the necessity of stating to your lordship, that when I was taken into custody on suspicion of this felony, every article about my person

person was taken from me; and although the gentleman, who is my accuser, did not attempt to say any money was lost, my money was also taken from me; and, although I have made application that this money may be restored, it is, however, still detained; by which detention, my Lord, I have been hindered from taking those proper measures for my defence, and from obtaining that legal assistance, which my unfortunate situation peculiarly requires."

Mr. Recorder. Mr. Barrington, it is impossible for me to decide, previous to your trial, what is your property; but, when your prosecutor appears, every thing which has been taken from you, and which is not necessary to be identified on your trial, shall be restored to you.

George Law, the constable, produced the articles above mentioned, as also a silk purse, with twenty guineas, which were taken from Mr. Barrington, at the time he was taken into custody.

Mr. Recorder. Mr. Barrington, I shall order your money to be returned to you.

On Friday Barrington was put to the bar, and the indictment was read as before.

Henry Hare Townsend, Esq. sworn.

On the 1st of September I was at Enfield Marsh, on account of the races; I believe it was near two o'clock, that is the time that is fixed for the horses to start; I was on foot; I went on the ground in a phaeton; I got out of the phaeton, and was walking about; I did not miss my watch till I was spoke to by a Mr. Blades; I missed it from my waistcoat pocket; I had a new pair of leather breeches on, and was afraid the seals would dirt them; it was a gold watch and chain, and metal key; I felt my watch in my pocket after I came on the ground; I think it must have been a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes before I missed it. I recovered my watch again, but I do not recollect who produced it to me; the watch was given to Lady Lake, and she took it home with her; and, when we took Mr. Barrington before the justice, I sent for the watch, and the watch was given to me by a servant.

Walduck sworn.

I am coachman to Mr. Townsend, I knew nothing of the matter till I helped to take the prisoner to the booth; I had one hand on his collar and the other hold of his right hand which was open. He could have nothing at all in his right hand. I was left in care of him. I put him at the back of the booth, and there was a carpet nailed at the back of that. I saw the watch drop between Barrington and the carpet, it apparently fell on the left side of him behind him, I saw it as it jingled down before it reached the ground.

Mary Danby.

I was in the next booth to that in which the prisoner was brought in, I was but a very little way off him, there was nobody between him and me, nothing but the partition; I was next the partition, the prisoner was sideways to me when he dropped the watch on his side; he dropped the watch from his hand; I told him of it at the time; I cannot recollect which hand his hand; was by the side of him at the time I saw it drop from him, and I mentioned it to him at the time.

Prisoner's Defence.

"May it please your Lordship, and you Gentlemen of the Jury, to favour me with your attention for a little time. The situation of every person who has the misfortune to stand here is extremely distressing and awkward; mine is so in a peculiar degree: if I am totally silent, it may be considered, perhaps, as a proof of guilt, and if I presume to offer those arguments which present themselves to my mind, in my defence, they may not perhaps be favoured with that attention which they might deserve; yet I by no means distrust the candor and benevolence of the Jury, and, therefore I will beg leave to proceed to state the circumstances of the case, as they occur to me, not doubting but they will meet with some degree of credit, notwithstanding the unhappy situation I am in. Gentlemen, I was on the Race-Ground at Enfield, observing the race on the day that the indictment mentions, where I found myself surrounded by Mr. Townsend and numbers of others; Mr. Townsend

said,

said, "Your name is Barrington, and you have taken my watch!" I told him he was right as to my name, but he accused me unjustly; however, I would go any where with him; I was removed from thence to a stand, from whence the races were viewed; it consisted of two booths, and they were separate from each other with only a railing elbow high; and it is a great misfortune to me, Gentlemen of the Jury, that you were not able to observe the situation of those booths: for, if you had, you would have found it nearly impossible that some circumstances which have come from the witnesses could have been true. I was close to the railing that separated the two booths, and some person said. "Here is a watch!" This watch Mr. Townsend claimed, and said it was his. I was removed from thence to the Angel at Edmonton, where the examination took place; and I am very sorry to be under the necessity of observing, that a very material difference has taken place in the depositions delivered that day before the magistrate in various respects. A witness, the coachman, positively declared that he did not see this watch in my hand, that he did not see me take it from my pocket, that he did not see it drop from my person, but that he saw it on the ground, and he might have gone so far as to say he saw it fall; I took the liberty of asking him one question, Whether he had seen this watch in my hand, whether he had seen it fall from me? He declared he did not. I then asked him, whether he could take upon himself to swear, from the situation he stood in at the adjoining booth, that this watch might not have dropped from some other person; he declared he could not observe any such thing. Gentlemen, with respect to the evidence of Kendrick, he made the same declaration then. Mr. Townsend has brought me here, under the charge of having committed felony; he has told you, Gentlemen of the Jury, that he lost his watch out of his pocket, and that pocket was a waistcoat pocket; that he was in a very extraordinary situation; that he was on the race-ground, where certainly the greatest decorum is not always observed; and he was also in a situation which exposed him more to the pressure he complained of, than any other person; for, instead of his horse being in possession of his jockey or groom, he attended

it himself ; and I must beg leave to observe, Gentlemen of the Jury, that it is a custom, where people bet money as races, to wish to see the horse immediately after the heat is over, so that the pressure which Mr. Townsend had, or what he thought he had from me, could not appear very extraordinary ; and I am under the necessity of saying, his fancy has rather been improved on the occasion. With respect, Gentlemen, to the last witness that has appeared, I will not say any thing on the occasion ; that will rest entirely upon you. It was a circumstance, however, of a most extraordinary nature, that this person should never come forward till the present moment ; and, whether the contradictions and strange accounts she has given of herself are such as to entitle her to any credit, particularly in a situation where the life and liberty of another person is at stake, is not for me to observe upon. Gentlemen of the Jury, it may, perhaps, be expected by many persons, in this place, that I should say a great deal about prepossession and newspaper reports ; and, if I had the ability to do it, perhaps I should not be blamed ; for, he who has been the unhappy object of much defamation has surely a right to deprecate its baneful effects : where much pains have been taken to defame, some pains may be surely allowed to abate that defamation. Gentlemen, that it has been the hard lot of some unhappy persons to have been convicted of crimes they really did not commit, less through evidence than ill natured report, is, doubtless, certain ; and doubtless there are many respectable persons, now in Court, fully convinced of the truth of that observation. Sometimes, it is to be hoped, are passed ; I dread not such conviction in my own person ; I am well convinced of the noble nature of a British Court of Justice ; the dignity and benign principles of its Judges, and the liberal and candid spirit of its Jurors.

“ Gentlemen, life is the gift of God ; and liberty the greatest blessing : the power of disposing of both, or either is the greatest man can enjoy. If it also adventitious the great as that power is, it cannot be better placed than in the hands of an English Jury ; for, they will not exercise like tyrants, who delight in blood, but like generous

brave men, who delight to spare rather than to destroy; and who, not forgetting they are men themselves, lean, when they can, to the side of compassion. It may be thought, Gentlemen of the Jury, that I am applying to your passions; and, if I had the power to do it, I would not fail to employ it: the passions animate the heart; and to the passions we owe our dearest and finest feelings; and when it is considered, the mighty power you now possess, whatever leads to a cautious and tender discharge of it must be thought of great consequence: as long as the passions conduct us on the side of benevolence, they are our best, our safest, and our most friendly, guides. Gentlemen of the Jury, Mr. Townsend has deposed that he lost his watch, but how, I trust, is by no clear; I trust, Gentlemen, you will consider the great the almost impossibility, that having had the watch in my possession for so long a time, time sufficient to have concealed it in a variety of places, to have conveyed it to town, it should still be in my possession. You have heard from Mr. Townsend, that there was an interval of at least half an hour between the time of losing the watch and my being taken into custody: there is something, Gentlemen, impossible in the circumstance; and, on the other hand, it has sometimes happened, that remorse, a generous remorse, has struck the minds of persons in such a manner as to have induced them to surrender themselves into the hands of Justice rather than an innocent person should suffer. It is not, therefore, I suppose, improbable, that, if Mr. Townsend lost his watch by an act of felony, the person who had the watch in his possession, feeling for the situation of an unhappy man, might be induced to place that watch on the ground. But it is by no means certain how Mr. Townsend lost his watch, whether by an act of felony, or whether by accident; it might have fallen into the hands of some other person, and that person, feeling for my unhappy situation, might have been induced to restore it. I humbly hope, that the circumstances of the case are such as may induce a scrupulous Jury to make a favourable decision; and I am very well convinced that you will not be led by any other circumstances than those of the present case; either from reports of former misfortunes, or by the fear of my falling

ing into similar ones. I am now just thirty-two years of age, (shall be so next month); it is nearly half the life of man; it is not worth while being impatient to provide for the other half, so far as to do any thing unworthy. Gentlemen, in the course of my life I have suffered much distress, I have felt something of the vicissitudes of fortune, and now, from observation, I am convinced, upon the whole, there is no joy but what arises from the practice of virtue, and consists in the felicity of a tranquil mind and a benevolent heart; sources of consolation which the most prosperous circumstances do not always furnish, and which may be felt under the most indigent. It will be my study, Gentlemen, to possess them; nor will the heaviest affliction of poverty, pain, or disgrace, cause me to part with resolutions founded on deepest reflection, and which will end but with life. I will perish on the pavement before I will deviate from them. For my own part, whatever your verdict may be, I trust I shall be enabled to meet it with a firmness of mind: he, indeed, has little to fear from death, whose fame is tarnished, and who has endured the ceaseless abuse of unfeeling minds; when Heaven accepts contrition, it receives into favour when it pardons; but man, more cruel than his Maker, pursues his offending brother with unrelenting severity, and marks a deviation from rectitude with a never-dying infamy, and with unceasing suspicion and reproach, which seem to exclude him from the pale of virtue. Gentlemen of the Jury, the thought of death may appal the rich and prosperous, but, on the other hand, the unfortunate cannot have much to fear from it; yet the tenderness of nature cannot be quite subdued by the utmost degree of human resolution, and I cannot be insensible to the woes which must be felt by an affectionate companion and an infant offspring; and there is besides a principle in human nature, stronger even than the fear of death, and which can hardly fail to operate some time or other in life; I mean, the desire of good fame. Under that laudable influence, Gentlemen, if I am acquitted, I will quickly retire into some distant land, where my name and misfortunes will be alike unknown; where harmless manners shall shield me from the imputation of guilt, and where prejudice will not be

be liable to misrepresentation; and I do now assure you, Gentlemen of the Jury, that I feel a cheering hope, even at this awful moment, that the rest of my life will be so conducted as to make me as much an object of esteem and applause as I am now the unhappy object of censure and suspicion." **GUILTY.**

After the verdict was pronounced, the Lord Chief Baron thus addressed the prisoner:

"Mr. Barrington, hitherto I have conducted myself towards you as if I had never seen you before; but now, when nothing which I can say can prejudice the Jury, I must say that you have been treated with much more favour than you deserve. This ought to have been a capital indictment, and it ought to have reached your life; and public justice very much calls for such a sacrifice; for, if there was a man in the world that abused and prostituted great talents to the most unworthy and shameful purposes, you are that man; and you have done it against all warning, against the example of your own case, and of a thousand other cases that have occurred; and I am afraid, that now, as the punishment does not reach your life, I cannot entertain the least hope that you will in any manner reform; but that the end of it will be, that you must be a shameful spectacle at your latter end."

Mr. Barrington bowed and retired.

On Wednesday the 22d of September, 1790, the Recorder pronounced the sentence of the Court upon him, which was, That he be transported for the term of seven years, to such parts beyond the seas as his Majesty in Council should be pleased to direct.

After his sentence was passed, Barrington addressed the Court in a sort of valedictory speech, conceived in nearly the following terms:

"My Lord,

"I have a great deal to say in extenuation of the crime for which I now stand convicted at this bar; but, upon consideration, I will not arrest the attention of the honourable Court too long. Among the extraordinary vicissitudes incident to human nature, it is the peculiar and unfortunate

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lot of some devoted persons, who have their best wishes, and most earnest endeavours, to deserve the good opinion of the most respectable part of society, entirely frustrated. Whatever they can say, or whatever they may do, every word and its meaning, every action and its motive, is represented in an unfavourable light, and is distorted from the real intention of the speaker or the actor.

"That this has been my unhappy fate does not seem to stand in need of any confirmation.

"Every effort to deserve well of mankind, that my heart bore witness to is requisite, has been by such measures as those, and consequently has been rendered abortive. Many of the circumstances of my life, I can, without any violation of truth, declare to have, therefore, happened absolutely in spite of myself.

"The world, my Lord, has given me credit for abilities, indeed much greater than I possess, and, therefore, much greater than I deserved; but I have never found any kind hand to foster these abilities.

"I might ask, where was the generous and powerful hand that was ever stretched forth to rescue George Barrington from infamy? In an age like this, which, in several respects, is so justly famed for liberal sentiments, it was my severe lot, that no well minded gentleman stepped forward and said to me, *Barrington, you are possessed of talents which may be useful to society. I feel for your situation; and, as long as you are the part of a good citizen, I will be your protector: you will then have time and opportunity to rescue yourself from the obloquy of your former conduct.*

"Alas, my Lord, George Barrington had never the supreme felicity of having such comfort administered to his wounded spirit. As matters have unfortunately turned out the die is cast; and, as it is, I bend, resigned to my fate without one murmur or complaint."

After having spoken in this manner, with more elegance perhaps, than reason or truth, he bowed respectfully to the court, the jury, and the auditory, and withdrew from the public scene, at least, in Europe, probably for ever, in the thirty-fifth year of his age.